

LC003658

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO COURTS AND CIVIL PROCEDURE -- PROCEDURE GENERALLY --
EVIDENCE

Introduced By: Senators Lauria, Lawson, Euer, LaMountain, Zurier, Pearson,
McKenney, DiMario, Murray, and Gallo
Date Introduced: January 09, 2026

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Chapter 9-19 of the General Laws entitled "Evidence" is hereby amended by
2 adding thereto the following section:
- 3 **9-19-45. Statements or conduct expressing apology, regret, condolence by health care**
4 **provider -- Admissibility.**
- 5 (a) For the purposes of this section, the following words shall have the following meanings:
- 6 (1) "Healthcare facility" means any institutional health service provider licensed pursuant
7 to the provisions of chapter 17 of title 23.
- 8 (2) "Healthcare provider" or "provider" shall have the same meaning as the meaning
9 contained in § 5-37.3-3.
- 10 (3) "Relative" means a patient's spouse, parent, grandparent, stepparent, child, grandchild,
11 brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister, uncle, aunt, adopted children of parent, or spouse's parents,
12 whether by whole or half blood, adoption or marriage.
- 13 (4) "Representative" means a legal guardian, attorney, health care representative or any
14 person recognized in law or custom as a patient's agent.
- 15 (5) "Unanticipated outcome" means the outcome of a medical treatment or procedure that
16 differs from an expected result of such medical treatment or procedure.
- 17 (b) In any claim, complaint or civil action brought against a healthcare facility or provider
18 by or on behalf of a patient allegedly experiencing an unanticipated outcome, or in any arbitration

1 proceeding or other method of alternative dispute resolution that relates to the claim, complaint or
2 civil action, and in any judicial or administrative proceeding against a healthcare facility or
3 provider, the following shall be inadmissible as evidence of an admission of liability or as evidence
4 of an admission against interest:

5 (1) Any and all statements, affirmations, gestures, writings, activities or conduct expressing
6 apology, benevolence, commiseration, condolence, compassion, regret, sympathy, or a general
7 sense of concern which are made by a healthcare facility, a healthcare provider, or an employee or
8 agent of a healthcare facility or provider, to the patient, the patient's relative, or a representative of
9 the patient which relate to any alleged discomfort, pain, suffering, injury, or death of the patient as
10 a result of the unanticipated outcome.

11 (2) This section shall not apply to a statement of fault, liability, negligence, or culpable
12 conduct that is part of or made in addition to a statement, affirmation, gesture, writing, activity, or
13 conduct described in subsection (b)(1) of this section, and only the expression of apology,
14 benevolence, commiseration, condolence, compassion, regret, sympathy, or a general sense of
15 concern made under subsection (b)(1) of this section is inadmissible.

16 (3) Any statement, affirmation, gesture, writing, activity, or conduct described in
17 subsection (b)(1) of this section is admissible for any other purpose.

18 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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1 This act would provide that statements by a healthcare provider to a patient or to the
2 patient's relative or representative regarding the unanticipated outcome of such patient's medical
3 care and treatment, such as an apology or an expression of sympathy, shall be inadmissible as
4 evidence of an admission of liability or as evidence of an admission against interest in any claim
5 or action against the provider.

6 This act would take effect upon passage.

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